

Title: Documents Required for Travel Within the Western Hemisphere

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General Comment: Requiring a passport for travel will greatly impact the tourism industry here in Canada, and I can only assume that it will affect the U.S. tourism industry even more drastically. I manage one of the largest resorts on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, which is only a short distance from Seattle. About 25% of our business is from the United States, and requiring a VISA will prompt potential travellers to seek other destinations. Likewise, the reverse would hold true to an even greater extent as many Canadians travel to the U.S. because of the ease. I know many people who do not have passports, but travel frequently over the border for weekend getaways. For example, one of my Directors and his wife do not have passports, and I just awarded them with a last minute cruise to Mexico departing from San Diego. Another manager was supposed to go on the trip, which is an industry related cruise; however, a quick departure had us searching for a replacement. The manager we chose is unable to go because a Passport takes too long to process. This is only one example, but I can honestly say that restricting travel between countries is going to have a huge impact on tourism. When choosing short haul travel (ie. within 2-5 hour drive) many people will pick other locations within their own country to avoid the hassle and cost of crossing the border. This is a big mistake.